

Modernization and enculturation: the Catholic church in Showa Japan

著者	Thompson Micheal
journal or publication title	Comparative culture, the journal of Miyazaki International College
number	4
page range	1-13
year	1998
URL	http://id.nii.ac.jp/1106/00000626/

Modernization and Enculturation: The Catholic Church in Showa Japan

Míchéál Thompson

The history of the Catholic Church reflects a continuing struggle to accommodate its inherently universalist claims to a wide variety of socio-cultural settings. The extent and desirability of such accommodation is the central issue of enculturation. The history of the Catholic Church in Japan, and especially in the Showa period (1926-1989), has been a gradual progression towards greater enculturation and a slow deepening of understanding as to what enculturation really means. This essay traces the history of the Catholic Church in Showa Japan and the evolution of ideas and practices of enculturation as the Church faced the challenges of a modernizing Japan.

カトリック教会の歴史には広範多様な社会的文化的状況にその主張するところの普遍性を対応させようとする不断の苦闘の影を見ることができる。このような応接がどの程度の揺がりをもち得たか、またそれがどれ程必要であったか、それが文化同化という問題の中心にある。日本におけるカトリック教会の歴史、中でも昭和期（1926-1989）のそれはより大きな文化同化に向かう緩やかな発展の歴史であり、文化同化の真の意味が次第に深く理解されて行く歴史であった。本稿は近代化しつつある日本が投げ掛ける困難な課題に教会が向き合わねばならなかった昭和期におけるカトリック教会の歴史と、思想の展開及び文化同化の実態とを辿ろうとするものである。

Introduction: Universality and Enculturation

The Catholic Church by its name claims the title of being the "universal church". This universality extends to both orthodoxy (correct thought) and orthopraxy (correct practice) however, the Catholic Church is an institution which functions in this world and consequently it has never been able to ignore the questions of culture, language, and tradition which divide one people from another. The challenge for the Catholic Church in its mission endeavors from the beginning has been how to adequately reconcile universality with the claims of a variety of different cultures to be respected in their own right. For the first few hundred years of Christian activity, the church rapidly incorporated many aspects of the societies in which it worked from language to distinct cultural practices. This process of accepting new cultural practices and becoming a truly integral part of society is the process of enculturation. The variety of "oriental rites" (such as the Syriac Rite, the Coptic Rite, the Malabar Rite, etc) stem from this early period. The church was fully enculturated in these societies in a comparatively short time and often became the central symbol of a nationality or people.

The early missionary activity of the church in western Europe also allowed for significant enculturation in many church practices but with the major exception that Latin was retained throughout the western church for liturgical purposes. The schism between the eastern (Orthodox) church and the western (Catholic) church solidified this mixture of enculturation and supra-nationality in the western church as opposed to the eastern church practice of complete enculturation. The medieval western church could lay plausible claim to "universality" in Europe but the combination of the sixteenth century Reformation and the growth of mission activity outside of Europe placed severe strains on any endorsement of the validity of enculturation. The response of the Catholic Church to the Reformation was to enforce a far more thoroughgoing uniformity than had existed before through the ordinances of the Council of Trent. Local liturgical variants were largely suppressed and uniformity of both orthodoxy and orthopraxy was rigorously enforced in Catholic countries. The mission churches outside of Europe were shaped by this Post-Tridentine effort for uniformity. Not only were the liturgical practices and church disciplines in the missions expected to be in complete conformity with Roman regulations, but indigenous cultural practices were scrupulously examined for their acceptability to the Catholic Church.

The most famous debate over the relationship of non-Christian practices to membership of the Catholic Church came with the "Chinese Rites Controversy" which

concerned the question of whether Confucian practices with respect to family ancestors constituted religious observance (and were therefore unacceptable) or non-religious displays of cultural and family solidarity (and were thus permitted to Catholics). After many years of debate, Confucian practices were declared to be incompatible with Catholicism (Mungello, 1994). This central issue of enculturation may have been resolved in China, though at the expense of seriously hampering future missionary efforts, but it was to return again as a serious question in Japan when the missionaries returned to that country in the nineteenth century and this time it was not just a question of dealing with age old tradition but of coping with modernization as well.

From the Bakumatsu to Showa: Promise and Challenge

With the opening of Japan to the West in the Bakuhan period, Catholic missionaries returned to what had been one of their most fertile mission fields in the seventeenth century. In the brief period from the arrival of St Francis Xavier at Kagoshima in 1549 to 1614 when Tokugawa Hidetada issued an order banning Christianity from Japan, the Catholic missionaries had been uniquely successful. The most reliable estimate indicates that by the latter date there were approximately 300,000 Christians in Japan. Though Christians could be found in many locations, the biggest concentration was in Kyushu especially in northern Kyushu around the city of Nagasaki which was the center of Jesuit activity. By the time of the edict closing the country to the West (except for the small Dutch trading station at Deshima) in 1639 this number had been reduced by half (Boxer, 1951). Executions and apostasy were the main factors causing this decline, especially after the collapse of the Shimabara Uprising in 1638. In 1640, the Bakufu created the "Christian Suppression Office" to systematically eradicate Christianity from Japan. Its methods were harsh but seemingly effective in achieving their goals (Harrington, 1993). The practice of enforced family registration at local Buddhist temples meant that the family unit as a whole was responsible for the religious orthodoxy of all of its members. This requirement paralleled the use of the "five family system" (五人組) to regulate other aspects of social behavior. The most famous method used to detect Christians was the ceremony of "picture treading" in which all inhabitants of a village or town were expected to trample on an image of Christ or the Virgin Mary (踏絵) tangible evidence of their not being Christian.

The active persecution of Christians declined during the eighteenth century as the authorities came to accept the idea that Christianity had been largely eradicated. In this they were not entirely correct. Ironically, the "five family system" permitted Christianity to survive in that, if all members of the unit were Christian, then self-supervision reinforced their ability to maintain their Christianity in secret (Elison, 1973). Though estimates vary, approximately 50,000 people would claim to be Christian when Japan was opened once again to the West.

The first Catholic missionary to be allowed to enter Japan since the banning of Christianity was a French priest who arrived in Edo in 1859 to serve as the interpreter for the new French consul. In the next few years, the French missionaries established chapels in Hakodate, Yokohama, and Nagasaki. Christianity was still banned and their activities were meant to be restricted to serving the foreign population in these cities. The Meiji Restoration initially made no difference to this situation as the government attempted to reinforce the ban on Christianity in 1868. They did so because it had become suddenly apparent that all of their efforts had failed to totally extinguish Christianity. In 1865 Father Bernard Petitjean (the French priest in Nagasaki) was approached by a group of "Hidden Christians" (隠れキリシタ) who declared their identity as Christians. The authorities responded with renewed persecutions including the exile of 4,000 Christians from Kyushu to various other parts of Japan. It was only in 1873 in response to foreign pressure that the anti-Christian legislation was repealed and Christianity was once more legally permitted in Japan (Whelan, 1996).

The Catholic church in Japan in 1873 was then in a position to be optimistic about its future. A large, potential group of converts had been discovered and Christianity was both legal and attractive as it was seen as being intimately linked with making Japan a "modern" nation and the Japanese a "modern" people. The following years were to prove that this vision of fast and easy progress for the Catholic church was an overly optimistic one. By the

beginning of the Showa period (1926), the total of Catholics in Japan was under 100,000 of whom around 20,000 were descendants of "Hidden Christians" (Considine, 1942). In terms of organization, the church had established a diocesan structure in 1891 with an Archdiocese in Tokyo and three dioceses in Hakodate, Osaka, and Nagasaki. Subsequently five prefecture apostolices (Shikoku, Niigata, Sapporo, Nagoya, and Hiroshima) had been established in the early years of the twentieth century (Catholic Church, 1997). Though Japanese priests had been ordained beginning in 1882, the bishops and prefects apostolic were all missionaries from Europe. In essence the Catholic church had not lived up to its early promise of rapid growth.

There are a number of reasons to account for this slow growth. The first of these is undoubtedly the fact that the majority of the "Hidden Christians" did not embrace Catholicism when the opportunity was finally available to them. The Catholic missionaries in Kyushu were all representatives of the Paris Mission Society (*Société des Missions-Etrangères de Paris*) who were initially given exclusive rights to the Catholic mission in Japan. They had a strong attachment to the necessity for complete orthodoxy and orthopraxy which meant that "Hidden Christians" were expected to conform in all respects to the standards of mid-nineteenth century European Catholicism. This raised practical issues concerning such questions as the validity of "Hidden Christian" baptisms and the acceptance of second marriages which they may have contracted. It also raised more fundamental questions about the extent to which the beliefs and cultural practices which the "Hidden Christians" had evolved over their years of isolation from the church and which had sustained them during this long period could be accepted or validated. The missionaries were largely skeptical of the value of these practices and fundamentally rejected their validity. There was no possibility of accommodation, to be accepted as a Catholic required a new baptism and the rejection of "Hidden Christian" practices. While specific problems of marriage may have discouraged many "Hidden Christians" from seeking to become Catholics, it was this fundamental unwillingness on the part of the missionaries to respect or validate the past of the "Hidden Christians" which led most of them to refuse the offer of Catholicism. The faith and practice which the missionaries represented was seen by most of the "Hidden Christians" as being totally alien to what they understood Christianity to mean. The failure of the missionaries to make an effort to incorporate the real past of the "Hidden Christians" was a failure to enculturate to any measurable degree. It was a failure which cost them perhaps 30,000 potential converts (Harrington, 1993).

This idea of Christianity being completely alien had been the dominant ideology throughout the Tokugawa period and, after the "honeymoon" with the West was over, it began to reassert itself. The "modernizers" of Japan began to be more discriminating in their assessments as to what should be emulated from the West and how far different ideologies could or should be propagated in Japan. Paralleling this questioning of the indiscriminate importation of things Western was the growth of a sense of modern Japanese nationalism and of the superiority of Japan to other nations and cultures. The defeat of China in the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and of Russia in the war of 1904-05 added to this increase in nationalistic spirit. The Catholic church in Japan was uniquely challenged by both this reassessment of modernization and the growth of nationalism.

Though the Catholic missionaries were the first to arrive in Japan in the mid-nineteenth century, they were not to be left alone in the mission field. Very shortly afterwards, Protestant missionaries began to establish churches and communities in various parts of Japan. These Protestant missions had certain very tangible advantages over those of the Catholics which rapidly outweighed any putative lead that the Catholics might have based on their supposed standing with respect to the "Hidden Christian" communities. Firstly, if Christianity was at least partially attractive because it was linked to the process of modernization, then the Protestant missions were far more definitively modern. The Protestant missions were based on religious bodies in Britain and the United States which powers were seen as being the most modern and the most economically dynamic. The Catholic missions with their affiliations to France, Spain, and Italy appeared to be (and indeed were) far less modern in their liturgy, practices, and ways of thought. While Catholic continuity with their sixteenth century predecessors helped in reclaiming some of the "Hidden Christians" to orthodoxy in northern Kyushu, it was not an advantage in seeking conversions among the modernizing elite and middle class in more central parts of Japan.

Among the more conservative Japanese, Catholicism was the same power which had threatened the integrity of the country in the seventeenth century. Protestantism at least represented something new and could be embraced as part of a package of modernization (Cary, 1909).

The nature of the Catholic missions also put them at some disadvantage with respect to Protestantism as they both confronted the growth of modern Japanese nationalism and imperialism, which were themselves the products of contact with the Western powers. The liturgical flexibility of the Protestant missions allowed them to create Japanese language liturgies from the beginnings of their activities in Japan which assisted not only in their conversion efforts but also in their portrayal of themselves as being fully enculturated, fully Japanese. The organizational flexibility of most of the Protestant bodies allowed for the creation of autonomous Japanese churches early on in their activities, the [Presbyterian] Church of Christ in Japan can trace its origins to the 1870's in Tokyo (日本キリスト教会).

This possibility for autonomous churches, which did not have as their head someone living outside of Japan, was clearly a favorable factor for the Protestant churches in their adjustment to nationalism. Partly as a reflection of these factors and of the growth in the Protestant churches which ensued and partly as a reflection of the nature of ministry in Protestantism as opposed to Catholicism, by the end of the reign of the Emperor Meiji, the Protestants were far less reliant on missionaries to serve as pastors. For the Catholics, 80% of their priests were non-Japanese in 1907 while nearly 60% of the Protestant ordained ministers were Japanese. These figures become even more striking if the number of unordained ministers employed by Protestant churches is included, the number of unordained ministers (all of whom were Japanese) was 629 as compared to the 815 ordained ministers (Cary, 1909).

The First Decades of Showa (1926-1945): A Japanese Catholic Church?

The Catholic Church was then vulnerable to the challenge that it was an alien body whose loyalties lay outside of Japan. While part of this challenge could not easily be refuted, such as the indisputable centrality of the Papacy to Catholicism, the Catholic Church did try to respond to these accusations by hastening the process of enculturation in so far as it could. In 1926 the Tokyo Seminary was opened to assist in the training of Japanese candidates for the priesthood in Japan (the Major Seminary was opened in 1929). In addition, Hayasaka Kyunosuke was made the first native Japanese Bishop (of Nagasaki) in 1927 (Catholic Church [a], 1997). A Catholic translation of the New Testament (The Raguét Translation) had been available since 1910 but the different role assigned to Scripture in the liturgy of the Catholic Church as opposed to the Protestant churches restricted its role in enculturation. Most specifically, the Mass and all the central liturgical offices of the Catholic Church were celebrated in Latin. This may have been an admirable symbol of the universality of the church, but it was viewed rather differently by many outside of the church.

The most pressing problem for the Catholic Church was the issue of State Shinto and particularly the related question of how far Catholics could participate in the rites of State Shinto. Freedom of religion had been guaranteed to the Japanese people under the Meiji Constitution of 1889. However, this freedom was accompanied by a caveat that such freedom was "within limits not prejudicial to peace and order, and not antagonistic to [their] duties as subjects" (Minamaki, 1985). The Meiji government's initial efforts to merge Buddhism and Shinto into a national religion failed, and by the end of the Meiji period the government had separated their oversight of religions into two: The Bureau of Religions (for Buddhism, Christianity, and various Shinto sects) and the Bureau of Shrines (for non-sectarian State Shinto). The argument was that State Shinto was not a religion at all but that participation at shrine functions merely reflected good citizenship. As a corollary to this, not to attend shrine ceremonies was not to fulfill one's duty as a subject and thus was not covered by the freedom of religion clause of the Meiji Constitution.

The Catholic Church (and individual members of it) had experienced increasing difficulty with this question of shrine ceremonies and their meaning as the twentieth century progressed. Despite this pressure, attendance by Catholics at shrine ceremonies was

specifically forbidden by the Bishop of Nagasaki in 1916 (Minamaki, 1985). The brief respite from continually heightened nationalism in Japan during the reign of the Emperor Taisho (1912-1926) was followed by a loss of control by the Liberals and an increasingly intense wave of nationalism and militarism. Central to the program of the military was the placing of military officers in some secondary schools and universities to foster a spirit of national pride. This program (made universal in 1939) meant that State Shinto with the Emperor as the embodiment of the nation was taught at every school throughout Japan. A very practical demonstration of this idea of good citizenship was to train the students in respect for the war dead and in particular to encourage reverence for the Yasukuni Shrine where each person who had died for Japan in war was officially enshrined as a "Kami" (神).

The questions as to what being a "Kami" really meant, the role of reverence for the Emperor (whether religious or civil), and the centrality of militarism in State Shinto were deeply troubling for Catholics. It was a subject that they could not really avoid and this was made painfully clear in 1932. In September 1931 the Kwantung Army staged the "Manchurian Incident" and began its extensive invasion of China. Militarism was plainly dominant in Japanese politics and the Army was more and more in charge of the country. On May 5, 1932 a group of Sophia University students in Tokyo (A Jesuit institution) were led in parade by their military instructor past the Yasukuni Shrine. When told to present arms as a sign of their reverence for the enshrined war dead, two or three of them refused to do so. The Army Ministry was notified of the event. On May 15, Prime Minister Inukai Tsuyoshi was assassinated and the country moved still further to the right. In this tense situation, and no doubt partly as a result of it, the Archbishop of Tokyo (Jean Chambon) decided that permission should be given for Catholic students to show reverence at war shrines. He also requested official clarification from the Shrine Ministry of their interpretation of shrine ceremonies and requested the Apostolic Delegate to obtain the opinion of the Propaganda Fidei (Vatican Office for the Propagation of the Faith).

The Shrine Ministry responded with some alacrity and stated in their reply of September 1932 that what was required of the students had "no other purpose than that of manifesting the sentiments of patriotism and loyalty" (Minamaki, 1985). The more general question of shrine attendance for non-students was not addressed. Finally, in May 1936 as the Japanese military crisis deepened following the "February 26th Incident" in which a group of army officers attempted to assassinate the cabinet and take charge of the country, Propaganda Fidei responded. The Japanese Hierarchy had already decided in April of the previous year that Catholics could show reverence at Shinto Shrines. Now in the instruction from Rome (*Pluries instanturque*) it was permitted to all Catholics to attend State Shinto rites including funerals, marriages, and other ceremonies (Minamaki, 1985). A major crisis had been averted but it was perhaps as much a sign of weakness in the face of Japanese militarism as it was a positive desire for enculturation. This decision to compromise with the spirit of modern Japanese nationalism and imperialism would come back to haunt the Catholic Church in later years. In 1938 Doi Tasuo became the first native Japanese Archbishop of Tokyo, and in 1943 he led a delegation of leading Catholics to the Meiji and Yasukuni shrines to pay their respects (Catholic Church [CC], 1997). By then the Catholic Church in Japan had experienced some drastic changes.

As Japan moved further towards a state of total war, a number of missionaries began to withdraw from the country. With the signing of the Tri-Partite Pact with Germany and Italy in 1940 and especially with the attacks on Pearl Harbor and the British Empire in Asia in 1941, foreign missionaries were no longer welcome. In 1940 and 1941 all the diocese and prefectures apostolic were handed over to Japanese clergy following the resignation of their foreign incumbents. By the end of 1941, the Catholic Church in Japan was entirely an indigenous one. The wartime state reorganized all aspects of Japanese life including religion and in 1940 the "Law on Religious Bodies" was passed in an effort to regulate religious behavior and require state recognition of all religions. In May 1941, the Catholic Church in Japan was approved as the "Japanese Catholic Body" (日本カトリック教団) under this law (CC, 1997). Exactly what the consequences would be for the Catholic Church in Japan of this new legal position was not entirely evident at first, but it was clear that it somehow entangled the church more deeply with the Japanese state.

Some of the immediate changes were to be expected in a nation at war. The "Japan Catholic Newspaper" was reduced in size and frequency in July 1941 and its direction was

placed under the "Japanese Catholic Body" in October of the same year. These moves substantially reduced any possibility of the Catholic Church publishing statements which might question the activities of the government or the military. In August 1941, buildings belonging to the church or the religious orders were made available for military use should they be required. Such a patriotic act was reinforced by the Bishops requesting that a petition for victory be included at all Christmas Masses. One of the most important events in the Catholic liturgical calendar was thus used to reinforce loyalty to the military state of Japan. Potential conflicts between the Catholic Church and the state still existed, despite the attempt of the church authorities to minimise them. One of the most pressing of these potential conflicts concerned the extent to which the church could or should be actively involved in the war effort going beyond the surrender of buildings or even prayers for victory. In 1942 and again in August 1943, the military requested that the church provide priests as "pacification delegations" to the occupied islands of Indonesia. The church complied with this request and thus became even more explicitly involved with the war effort.

In 1943, the first training session for priests of the "Japanese Catholic Body" was held. This underlined the wartime subjugation of the church to the state by exposing its priests to formal training as part of this new state supervised corporate body. The "Japanese Catholic Body" was assiduous in its service to the state encouraging official visits to the Yasukuni and other shrines, restricting the use of clerical dress, orchestrating campaigns to collect platinum and silver for the state, and mandating further prayers for ultimate victory in all of its churches and religious houses. Of course, some decisions could be seen as more administrative than ideological, such as the appointment of Monsignor Seno Isamu to be both administrator apostolic of Sapporo and administrator apostolic of Sakhalin. The contested nature of Japanese authority over Sakhalin rendered even such administrative decisions perhaps morally questionable. Finally, in April 1944, the "Japanese Catholic Body" acquiesced to the government's order mobilizing all priests and monks into the workforce as conscripted labor. Whatever the balance between necessity and genuine enthusiasm for the nationalist project, the "Japanese Catholic Body" and therefore the Catholic Church in Japan of which it was the sole legitimate governing body, was inextricably linked to the policies of the Japanese government. The enculturation of the Catholic Church in Japan, so long delayed, had been speedily accomplished, but it was an enculturation into a nationalist Japan at war with its neighbors and the Western world.

The war was speedily running its course and the Japanese Empire was rapidly collapsing throughout East and Southeast Asia. The Allied bombings destroyed many buildings in Japanese cities, including many churches and Catholic institutions in Tokyo (the largest Catholic population center). Among the buildings destroyed were the offices of the "Japanese Catholic Body". Even more devastating was the atomic bomb raid on Nagasaki, whose epicenter was at Urakami, the center of Catholic life in the city and the site of the Cathedral. If Japan as a whole was reduced to a shambles by the war, the same was equally true of the Catholic Church in Japan which, like the rest of the nation, was faced with the daunting prospect of trying to restore what had been destroyed. For the Catholic Church however, there were unique challenges in this restoration project because it would be ultimately forced to reconsider its wartime actions in the light of its moral mission.

The Second Period of Showa (1945-1965): Universal, Japanese, Western?

In very short order after the cessation of hostilities, the Catholic Church began to disentangle itself from some of its wartime difficulties. First to go was the "Japanese Catholic Body" which was formally dissolved in November 1945 and replaced (under the new Religious Corporation Ordinance of the Occupation Forces) by the Inter-Diocesan Conference of the Japanese Hierarchy. Archbishop Doi of Tokyo, confirmed as head of the "Japanese Catholic Body" for a further four year term in May 1945, was now head of the Inter-Diocesan Conference (CC, 1997). One of the Conference's first actions was to re-establish a newspaper under episcopal direction (The Catholic Weekly) to insure an independent voice for the church. This newspaper commenced publication in February 1946. Classes at the major seminary in Tokyo recommenced in December 1945, though

responsibility for these classes was assigned in early 1947 to the Society of Jesus. The widespread poverty and destitution of the civilian population and the extra burden caused by people returning from the territories of the former Japanese Empire was reflected in the Catholic population as well. This distress was partially offset by Catholic relief aid coming from America. The events at Nagasaki had been widely publicized and had attracted the sympathy and assistance of Catholics in other countries which helped in the process of rebuilding the damaged or destroyed churches of Japan (Nevins, 1954).

The events of the beginnings of the Cold War in Asia also affected the Catholic Church in Japan. In 1949, an American was consecrated as Administrator Apostolic of the Ryukyus (which territory also included the southern islands of Kagoshima Prefecture such as Amami Oshima) in recognition of the continued American occupation of the area. At virtually the same time, with its peak in 1950, many missionaries who had been expelled by the Communist forces from China arrived in Japan. In Japan as whole, this was a time when much of the recent past could be occluded in a setting of anti-communist and largely pro-American rhetoric and practice. Clearly the Catholic Church in Japan did not question this situation but went quietly on with its efforts at reconstruction. The leadership of the Catholic Church remained in the hands of Archbishop Doi who had guided it through the war years.

The final ending of the American Occupation in most of Japan in 1952 led to the passing of new legal measures including the Religious Corporation Law under which the Catholic Church was legally reconstituted (for the final time) as the "Catholic Religious Corporation - Committee of the National Catholic Hierarchy". This implementation of the new law had no significant effect on the church's role or function. The 1950's and early 1960's were, however, years in which the church cemented its institutional structures, though the cascade of new dioceses reflected the church coming of age as a Japanese institution rather than any sudden growth in the Catholic population of Japan. The remaining Vicariates Apostolic (eight in total) were all converted into regular dioceses between 1952 and 1963, while the diocese of Nagasaki was promoted to an archdiocese (Japan's second) in 1959. All of these dioceses had Japanese bishops appointed to them (CC, 1997). The number of Japanese bishops had more than doubled in the space of a decade.

Accompanying this creation of new dioceses, and partly as a result of wartime destruction, this was also a period of a "building boom" for the Catholic Church in Japan. The new Cathedral at Hiroshima was completed in 1954, while the one at Nagasaki was consecrated in 1959. This physical building was accompanied by institution building beyond the establishment of new dioceses. The first conference on the Coordination of Catholic Welfare activities was held in November 1960, and the Association of Religious Congregations of Women (bringing together the many religious orders for women) was formed in November 1961. The Catholic Church was also intent on socially legitimating itself in other ways, most notable by a series of anniversary celebrations which underlined the history of the Catholic Church in Japan. The 400th anniversary of Christianity in Japan was celebrated in 1956, while the 100th anniversary of the church's re-establishment was held in 1962 in Yokohama (CC, 1997).

The Catholic Church had seemingly established a stable, though small, niche for itself in postwar Japanese society. Japan itself, though no longer under direct American tutelage, was safely under the American nuclear and foreign policy umbrella. Perhaps of equal importance was the fact that it seemed to be working in strictly economic terms. The Japanese economy was booming largely as a result of the massive economic demands placed upon it by the Korean War. The Japanese government was supportive of American foreign policy goals and initiatives and prospered as a result. The Catholic Church in Japan also prospered in this environment. The Catholic Church in general had not questioned itself in depth for centuries and the theological and practical lockstep imposed by the sixteenth century Council of Trent still provided the parameters in which the church operated. The Catholic Church in Japan followed in the same pattern, not questioning itself internally and not questioning its past and present role in Japanese and Asian society. The Catholic Church in Japan, like the country as a whole, seemed to have "made it". The only two clouds on the horizon were the perennial issue of enlarging church membership (measured in baptisms and confessional conformity) and the newer issue of the increasing materialism of society which was becoming slowly apparent as the country's affluence increased. This complacency was

soon to be rudely shattered by events within the church and in Japanese society which allowed long dormant questions to be asked and raised entirely new ones.

The Showa Era: The Third Period (1965-1989) Japanese and Asian?

The Third Session of the Second Vatican Council closed at the end of 1964 and in early February of the following year American bombers started their major attack on Hanoi escalating the Vietnam War to a major conflict (Havens, 1987). These two events (and their ramifications) were to provide the backdrop for the major controversies which were to animate the Catholic Church in Japan for the next two decades. The relative complacency of the Catholic Church internally was to be shattered by the former, while the latter was to lead to a major reassessment of the role of the church in Japanese society, its moral responses to war, the hegemony of America, and the challenge of balancing economic and moral issues in a modernizing society. Finally, and most forcefully, these events gave the Catholic Church the opportunity to confront the role of Japan in Asia in the present and the past and the relationship of the Catholic Church to this role.

The Second Vatican Council was a product of pressures in many parts of the Catholic Church for reform and for a thorough reassessment of the Catholic Church's awareness of its mission and ability to implement it. While the Catholic Church in Japan played a relatively small role in pushing for the Council, the forces unleashed by the Council were to institute change in Japan on every front of Catholic life (Colligan, 1991). The Council called for the greater recognition of the unique role of local and regional churches in presenting the Catholic faith in ways that were culturally appropriate for the setting in which the church was working. This was in effect the most positive call for enculturation that the Catholic Church had yet made. In some respects this move towards enculturation was straightforward, translation of liturgical texts into the language of the country is the most obvious example, but in other respects it was far more complicated. It required a deep understanding of exactly what the culture was in which the church was engaged in this process of enculturation. This also entailed a realistic assessment of the nature and needs of society as they actually were, a reevaluation of how they came to be that way, and an appraisal of how the church could best address society. For the Catholic Church in Japan, this was a set of challenges which would lead to much heart searching and the realization that its mission even within a framework of enculturation could lead as often to confrontation as it could to conciliation. The Japanese Catholic Church was being called to be both fully Japanese and fully Catholic, and the two were not always easily reconciled.

Throughout the 1970's, the various liturgical rites of the Catholic Church were translated into Japanese, culminating with the Liturgy of the Mass in 1978. However, not only liturgical texts were involved, the Scriptures also had to be made available in modern Japanese if the Catholic Church was to proceed with enculturation. The initial translations (such as the Raguet New Testament of 1910) were partial and in large measure outdated. Changes in the Japanese language, especially after the post-war spelling reforms, had rendered the old texts less than optimal. The Second Vatican Council had also called for a greater degree of openness with respect to other religions and especially other Christian denominations. The need for a modern version of the scriptures provided a perfect opportunity for the Catholic Church in Japan to implement some of this desire for ecumenism by cooperating with Protestant denominations in producing a translation of the Scriptures into the modern language. The inter-denominational version of the Gospel of Luke was published in 1975 with the New Testament and the complete Bible to follow in 1978 and 1987 (Matsumoto, 1991). This cooperation with other Christians augmented a common sense of purpose in which the adversarial positions of the past were rejected. The willingness with which the Catholic Church was to embrace ecumenism is demonstrated by their acceptance of the decision to adopt the "Protestant" reading of Christ's name as opposed to the "Catholic" one which had been in use since the sixteenth century (イエス and not イエズス).

This cooperation with other Christians has extended to "inter-faith" dialogs with other religions (most notably Buddhism) beginning in the 1970's. These dialogs represented a major step forward in the process of enculturation in contemporary society, but, as the analysis of this society deepened, it also became apparent that spiritual links with other

believers (whether Christian or not) only addressed some of the problems of being the Catholic Church in Japan. The Second Vatican Council was also a call for Catholic social action at all levels of society and not just as a form of enclosed "self-help" for members of the Catholic Church alone. This message was underlined by *Evangelii Nuntiandi* the Apostolic Exhortation issued by Pope Paul VI in 1975. Japanese society was seen to have a number of social problems, as with all societies, some of which (such as issues of human rights and the rights of the disabled) it shared with other countries. Three particular issues, however, were particular to modern Japan: the question of the civil rights of Burakumin; the problems of Korean residents of Japan; and the difficulties experienced by the increasing number of migrants (largely from Asia) now living in Japan. The Catholic Church felt called to address these issues despite their potentially contentious character (Matsumoto, 1991).

Discrimination against Burakumin (a caste group of ethnic Japanese whose involvement with certain "unclean" occupations had initially separated them from other Japanese, a situation which had later hardened under the Tokugawas) had not stopped with the Meiji Restoration and in fact, with the onset of modernization, had evolved into new forms of discrimination in terms of occupation, freedom of residence, freedom of marriage, etc. The use of the "Family Registries" to discriminate against Burakumin had become a widespread practice in twentieth century Japan. These registers were also used by the Catholic Church to establish a person's freedom to marry. Catholics participated in the initiatives of other Christian groups in addressing the issue of Burakumin discrimination and in 1984 formed the Catholic Committee for Buraku Liberation. In 1987 the use of "Family Registries" for Catholic marriages was abolished.

The issue of Korean residents in Japan was, if anything, more controversial. In 1945, as the Second World War ended, there were more than two million Koreans resident in Japan who had come to the country willingly or forcibly to contribute to the Japanese economy in the 1920's and 1930's. Korea had been an integral part of the Japanese Empire since its annexation in 1910, and as a result, Koreans could claim Japanese citizenship. With the end of the war, all but 600,000 of these Koreans returned to the now independent countries of North and South Korea. Those who remained behind were deprived of Japanese citizenship and became "permanent residents" with limited legal rights to remain in Japan. These people and their descendants form the current Korean community in Japan which has significant concentrations in the large urban areas of Kansai and Kanto (Lee, 1991). The most visible irritant for resident Koreans was the requirement under the Alien Registration Law that all non-citizens resident in Japan should be fingerprinted and carry a copy of this fingerprint on an alien registration card with them at all times. Since the 1980's there has been much agitation to revise the law, and the Catholic Church, among others, has petitioned the government to this effect. In order to highlight this campaign, a Catholic priest, Fr. Edouard Brzostowski, refused to be fingerprinted in 1984. Partly as a response to this action, the law was moderated in 1987. The Catholic Church has continued to be active in this area and has pushed for more changes in the law and its application.

The third major social issue, that of Asian migrants to Japan, is of more recent development, but it is both an increasing area of concern and reflects the deepening awareness of the Catholic Church in Japan of its nature not only as Japanese but as Asian. The initial impetus for concern was a consequence of the Japanese involvement with the Vietnam War. The anti-war movement in Japan was a largely secular affair, but some individual Catholics had become involved with the anti-war movement partly in the light of their understanding of the Second Vatican Council (Havens, 1987). The Japanese economy had received a massive boost from American involvement in the Vietnam War, orders for materiel had moved the economy forward in a number of areas. However, as the war escalated and the graphic images of yet another destructive war in Asia were seen on Japanese television sets, many Japanese were repulsed and began to look for a weakening of the lockstep relationship between America and Japan in foreign policy. This was especially the case for many students at Japanese universities, including Catholic ones, which led to a wave of political activism in 1968 and 1969. The fact that Okinawa was still under direct American rule and was being used as a support base for the American war efforts gave the protests a larger measure of popular appeal. The reversion of Okinawa to Japan in 1972 (adding incidentally another diocese, Naha, to the Catholic Church in Japan) alleviated some

of the more general disquiet but the extent of American bases in Okinawa has remained a perennial problem.

The collapse of the South Vietnamese government in 1975 led to a huge outflowing of refugees, the "Boat People", to many contiguous parts of Asia, including Japan. The Catholic Church in Japan took a leading role in providing resettlement programs for these refugees, many of whom were Catholics, and in agitating for a greater direct involvement of Japan in the refugee question. The government's comparative lack of involvement with the resettlement programs prompted much criticism from those groups who were helping in the Vietnamese in Japan. The necessity of acting without much government support resulted in a rise in the self-confidence of these groups in the necessity and possibility for social action. It also led to much thought about the links between Japan and other Asian countries and what these links meant. Enculturation involved not only adjustment to Japanese society, but also an acknowledgement that Japanese society was part of a wider Asian society. This process of critical thinking about the relationship between Japan and other Asian countries provided the essential basis for confronting the next pressing issue of social concern for the Catholic Church in Japan. If the question of Vietnamese refugees gradually declined in significance in the early 1980's, that of Asian migrant workers was taking on additional urgency with each passing year (Matsuda, 1991).

Asian migrant workers began to come to Japan in significant numbers from 1980. Initially most of these migrants were women, especially from the Philippines, who entered the country to work in the entertainment/sex industries. Many of these women were exploited by their "employers" and had nowhere to turn when they wished to escape from their current lives in Japan. A natural place for them to turn was to the Catholic Church as many of them were Catholics. Special committees were formed to help address some of the problems and the Church became involved in extensive social action on behalf of these women. Reflecting the spirit in which this work was undertaken, the chief of these committees was named the "Committee for Solidarity with Asian Women Residing in Japan" (Matsumoto, 1991). The issue was not just one of helping or performing "charitable actions" but of "solidarity" which required both a degree of real empathy with the women concerned (and beginning in the late 1980's men brought in for low wage labor as well) but also a recognition of Japan's responsibilities in Asia in the past and the present.

The influx of refugees in 1975 reflected Japan's (indirect) role in the Vietnam War while the flow of migrants reflected Japan's more direct role in the Philippines and other parts of Southeast Asia. The attempts which began in the 1970's to curb Japanese "sex tours" to the Philippines, in part also a Catholic Church initiative, indirectly contributed to the increase in female migrants to Japan in the 1980's. The issue was one of exploitation in both cases and this image of an exploitative Japan underlay much of the country's negative relationship with other Asian countries. Male migrancy reflected the relative affluence of Japan in Asia and the poor economic conditions in much of Southeast Asia. In addressing the concrete issues within Japan, the Catholic Church was increasingly drawn to look at the wider Asian context in which Japan acted. The Synod of Asian Bishops first convened in 1970 and formed the Federation of Asian Bishops in 1972. The Japanese Bishops joined the federation subsequently and the East Asian Regional Meeting of the federation was held in 1979 in Tokyo. This close linkage with other Catholic Churches in Asia led to a far reaching reconsideration of the role of the Catholic Church in Japan during the war years. The leadership of the Catholic Church in Japan had changed in the years following the death of Cardinal Doi in 1970. His successor as Archbishop of Tokyo (Seichi Shirayanagi) dramatically symbolised this in 1986 when, at the Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops in Tokyo he apologised to the assembled bishops for Japan's wartime actions and apologised for the Catholic Church's role in them (CC, 1997). This apology both initiated a further policy of solidarity of the Catholic Church in Japan with other Asian churches and reflected how far this sense of solidarity had already shaped the Catholic Church in Japan's view of itself. The process of enculturation now necessitated the recognition of the place of Japan in Asia and its effects on the mission of the Catholic Church. One of the central issues of the Catholic Church's wartime record in Japan and throughout Asia, and by extension its current and future role in society, had been its relationship to the idea of the imperial system and the ideas of nationalism it reflected. These ideas had not disappeared in 1945 and,

indeed, they were to resurface as a challenge to the Catholic Church in Japan in the later years of the Showa emperor.

Constitutionally, there is an absolute separation of church and state in postwar Japan with religious practice being an individual matter and with the state refraining from support of any religious group. During the 1930's and 1940's State Shinto was officially not a religion and, as has been noted, the Catholic Church under Archbishop Doi and the hierarchy accepted this explanation and ultimately encouraged all Catholics to follow their example and offer their respects at the shrines of State Shinto (Minamaki, 1985). The "Shinto Directive" of 1945 officially delinked State (Shrine) Shinto from all forms of state support stating that it "would be recognized as a religion if its adherents so desire and will be granted the same protection as any other religion in so far as it may in fact be the philosophy or religion of Japanese Individuals" (Hardacre, 1989). In the postwar period, and with the abolition of State Shinto, the Emperor is officially regarded as the Chief Priest of Imperial Family Shinto which is a private sect maintained by the Imperial Family. The legacy of State Shinto was, however, not so easily addressed. In particular, two key issues made such an easy solution difficult to arrive at: the Yasukuni Shrine and the complex role of the Emperor as both a constitutional ruler above politics and the Chief Priest of Imperial Family Shinto.

In the immediate postwar years, the whole question of the Yasukuni Shrine and the enshrining of the war dead as "kami" was moot but as Japan began to reassert itself as a leading Asian and global power it was raised again. Beginning in 1969, bills have been regularly introduced into the Diet supporting the re-nationalization of the Yasukuni Shrine and the provision of direct state financial support for it. To date, these bills have all been defeated but there has been considerable support for them from prominent politicians. To demonstrate this support, successive Japanese Prime Ministers have visited the Yasukuni Shrine beginning with an "unofficial" visit in 1975 by then Prime Minister Miki Takeo, with the first official visit of the Prime Minister and the whole Cabinet led by Nakasone Yasuhiro in August 1985. The Catholic Church, since the death of Cardinal Doi, has repeatedly and officially voiced its opposition to the re-nationalization of the shrine (in 1973, 1975, and 1980). The Catholic Justice and Peace Council maintains the Catholic Church's vigilance on this issue (Matsumoto, 1991). This opposition on the part of the Catholic Church reflects not only a reassessment of its own wartime role but also the feelings of the other Catholic Churches in Asia and of the Asian countries involved in the Second World War. It is in effect a reflection of the Catholic Church's commitment to enculturation in the context of contemporary Japanese and Asian culture. The acceptance by the Catholic Church of State Shinto in the 1930's reflected both pragmatism and enculturation into the nationalistic Japan of the day. The opposition of the Catholic Church to any possible re-acceptance of State Shinto is a measure of how far the process of enculturation is now seen to involve solidarity with other nations and peoples in Asia. Paradoxically then, enculturation into Japan might be seen to involve a measure of principled opposition to some facets of the Japanese state.

The non-political head of the Japanese state is the emperor who is also the Chief Priest of Imperial Family Shinto. In addition, in the person of the Emperor Showa, he was also the head of state who led Japan into the Second World War which ultimately inflicted great damage on both Japan and its neighbors. The first two represent a potential conflict of loyalties or understanding for some Japanese. Within the general parameters set by this conflict, other more particular issues came to a head with the death of the Emperor Showa on January 7, 1989. Obviously, the funeral rites for the late emperor (and the enthronement rites yet to come for his successor) would represent a potentially major challenge for the separation of church and state in Japan. Not only what was to be done but how it was to be done, who would attend and in what capacity, and who was to pay; all of these were difficult questions to answer. The Catholic Bishops' Conference issued a warning about the dangers of a resurgence of State Shinto and excessive nationalism and asked the government to insure that the legal separation of church and state would be observed (Matsumoto, 1991; CC, 1997). Though it lies outside the chronological scope of this paper, the issue of the relationship between the state and Shinto was to continue to shape much of the dialog between the Catholic Church, the Government, and civil society in the opening years of the reign of the Emperor Akihito.

Conclusion: A New Japanese Catholic Church?

The long reign of the Showa Emperor encompassed many transitions for Japan as a nation and for the Catholic Church in Japan. During his reign, Japan had made the transition from liberalism, through extreme nationalism, to the democracy of the post-war years. Japan had also moved from aggressive imperialism, through the era of American hegemony to its role as a leading world power in its own right. These transitions had been mirrored by changes in the Catholic Church in Japan. The Catholic Church too had had its transitions: from a largely missionary entity existing as an institution apart to a Church which appears to be fully enculturated into Japanese society; from a Church which tried to accommodate with dominant national trends to one which (in its resistance to both nationalism and materialism) tended to critically analyse and frequently reject these trends. The development of the Catholic Church in Japan had not been an easy one and neither had it been smooth and unilinear. The struggle between different ideas of the Church at the Second Vatican Council had revealed inner tensions within the Catholic Church as to its mission and how this could best be achieved in the modern world. These tensions had also been reflected in the Catholic Church in Japan.

One major sign of these tensions was the decline in vocations to fulltime church service which had affected the Catholic church in Japan as it had the Catholic Church throughout the world. This decline was especially noticeable in the increasing shortage of priests and male religious. Another source of tension, the movement towards ecumenism and enculturation with non-Christian cultural practices, did not go unopposed. In the early 1980's the aging Cardinal Archbishop of Nagasaki (Satowaki Joseph) was still cautioning about the "strange ideas" of some of the new bishops and the perils of "bringing ancestor worship into the church" (Fischer, 1984). The old habits of Catholic exclusivism, at odds with the newer ideas of openness to others, could also be seen in other ways. A magnificent and large new church was built at Unzen, also in the Archdiocese of Nagasaki, which has a Catholic population of eight (Catholic Diocese of Nagasaki, 1990). Whether this should be seen as a demonstration of the depth of Japanese Catholic history or a manifestation of pre-Vatican II triumphalism is an open question, though given the temper of the Archbishop the latter is a strong possibility. Despite events and statements such as these, the course upon which the Catholic Church in Japan was embarked in the last years of the Showa Emperor seems to be a clear one, though not without its potential pitfalls.

By the end of the Showa period, the Catholic Church in Japan had become fully enculturated into Japanese society and at the same time represented a universal message which included respect for human rights, concern for social injustice, solidarity with other Asian nations and peoples, and a resolute stand against the resurrection of ultranationalism. In the transition from the early years of Showa to 1989, the Catholic Church had both committed itself fully to a path of enculturation and come to a fuller understanding of what enculturation meant. To the extent that Japanese society as a whole has values or practices which stand in contradiction to these teachings of the Catholic Church, there will remain an inherent tension between enculturation to Japanese society and rejecting on the basis of a universal teaching the way that this society and many of its citizens behave. This is especially the case with respect to the dealings of Japan and the Japanese with the rest of Asia. Enculturation has come to be understood not only in terms of Japanese society narrowly considered but as an expression of solidarity with all Japanese people and with the people of Asia.

The Catholic Church has always had some problems in addressing and accommodating to the process and consequences of modernization whether in Japan or any other country. This is not likely to diminish in Japan in the future, whether the next challenges to the Catholic Church center on materialism, church-state relations, or some other issue. The Catholic Church in Japan, now numbering some 450,000, may not be a body apart as it was in the first years of the reign of the Emperor Showa but as this reign came to a close it was paradoxically still in many ways separate despite the largely successful process of enculturation. The new light in which enculturation was understood has in some ways led to this paradox. Perhaps, as Endo Shusaku the Catholic novelist famously noted, this was the inevitable fate of the Catholic Church in its creative engagement with the "bottomless swamp" of Japan in which the Christian message was of its nature alien (Takado, 1991). Or

perhaps, the future will be different and more like the vision of Francis Xavier who believed that in terms of Christianity "no other will be found to surpass the Japanese" (Elison, 1973).

References

- Boxer, C. R. (1951). *The Christian century in Japan, 1549-1650*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cary, O. (1909). *A history of Christianity in Japan: The Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox missions*. (3rd ed.). Rutland [VT]: Charles E. Tuttle.
- Catholic Church [a]. (1997). *An overview of the history of the Catholic church in Japan*. URL: <http://www02.so-net.or.jp/~catholic/Ehis/Table01.htm>.
- Catholic Church [b]. (1997). *Catholics in Japan and Catholic Dioceses*. URL: <http://www02.so-net.or.jp/~catholic/EDiocese/heade.htm>
- Catholic Diocese of Nagasaki. (1990). 長崎の教会 (Catholic Churches of Nagasaki). Nagasaki: Catholic Diocese of Nagasaki.
- Colligan, J. P. (1991). Roman Catholicism since Vatican II. In Y. Kumazawa & D. Swain (Eds.), *Christianity in Japan, 1971-90*. (pp. 3-15). Tokyo: Kyo Bun Kwan.
- Considine, J. J. (1942). *Across a world*. Toronto: Longmans, Green & Company.
- Elison, G. (1973). *Deus destroyed*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Fischer, E. (1984). *Japan Journey: The Columban fathers in Nippon*. New York: Crossroad.
- Hardacre, H. (1989). *Shinto and the state 1868-1988*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Harrington, A. M. (1993). *Japan's hidden Christians*. Chicago: Loyola Press.
- Havens, T. H. (1987). *Fire across the sea: The Vietnam War and Japan, 1965-1975*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Lee, C. (1991). Churches and minorities in a warped society. In Y. Kumazawa & D. Swain (Eds.), *Christianity in Japan, 1971-90*. (pp. 143-154). Tokyo: Kyo Bun Kwan.
- Matsuda, M. (1991). Asian migrant workers. In Y. Kumazawa & D. Swain (Eds.), *Christianity in Japan, 1971-90*. (pp. 155-170). Tokyo: Kyo Bun Kwan.
- Matsumoto, M. (1991). The Roman Catholic church in Japan. In Y. Kumazawa & D. Swain (Eds.), *Christianity in Japan, 1971-90*. (pp. 319-328). Tokyo: Kyo Bun Kwan.
- Minamaki, G. (1985). *The Chinese rites controversy from its beginning to modern times*. Chicago: Loyola Press.
- Mungello, D. E. (1994). *The Chinese rites controversy*. Nettetal: Steyler Verlag.
- Nevins, A. J. (1954). *The meaning of Maryknoll*. New York: McMullen Books.
- Spae, J.J. (1964). *Catholicism in Japan*. Tokyo: ISR Press.
- Takado, K. (1991). Japanese Christian writers. In Y. Kumazawa & D. Swain (Eds.), *Christianity in Japan, 1971-90*. (pp. 259-272). Tokyo: Kyo Bun Kwan.
- Whelan, C. (1996). *The beginning of heaven and earth: The sacred book of Japan's hidden Christians*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.